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New Orleans, March 15—The defense in the Kennedy assassination plot trial today will show that mystery witness Perry Raymond Russo, less than three weeks ago, told a different story and denied ever having seen Lee Harvey Oswald.

Attorneys for Clay L. Shaw, the wealthy retired businessman on trial here as the only living member of the alleged murder-conspiracy plot, will use Russo's own words, given voluntarily on a TV program, to try to discredit his sensational testimony as the star witness for District Attorney Jim Garrison.

Russo yesterday testified at the opening of preliminary hearings in the case against Shaw that he had been present in September, 1963, in the home of David W. Ferrie when Ferrie, Oswald and Shaw discussed plans for killing Kennedy. Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby in Dallas on Nov. 24, 1963, two days after the assassination. Ferrie died in his apartment here on Feb. 22 of a brain hemorrhage.

The defense will show that Russo, two days after Ferrie died, called a Baton Rouge newspaper to tell of his acquaintance with Ferrie and then also told his story on a television program. Both the newspaper interview and the TV appearance differed greatly from his court testimony.

The contradictory Russo interview was broadcast on Feb. 24 over WDSU, the NBC affiliate here. Russo said in reply to a question that Ferrie had never mentioned Oswald's name to him and then added:

"I never heard of Oswald until the TV assassination."

Caught by Surprise

Russo said the assassination caught him by surprise but that he had "left it to the professionals" on the Warren Commission "to come out with the verdict."

"Then they came out with the verdict," he continued, "that Oswald was the only man, so I forgot it."

He said he was unmoved by the Garrison investigation until he read that Ferrie had died. At first he said he thought it was another man named David Ferrie, but then recognized Ferrie's picture and wrote a letter to Garrison telling his story.

In the newspaper interview the same day the only persons other than Ferrie that Russo referred to were "a couple of" Spanish-speaking men in green fatigues with helmets who came to his home here with Ferrie on one occasion. He said he met a third man at Ferrie's home.

An essential part of Garrison's investigation has been centered on Cuban exiles who were trained in the New Orleans area by the CIA for the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion. Reportedly some of these Americans trained Cubans were believed by Garrison to have been in on the plot to kill Kennedy because of their disillusionment with the way the invasion was handled.

Russo had attended Tulane University and then switched over to Loyola University, where he graduated in 1964 with a bachelor's degree in political science. He then attended law school at Loyola for one year.

Steve Derby, his roommate in Baton Rouge, where Russo works for the Equitable Life Assurance Society, said Russo was "real smart and has lots of interests."

He said Russo enjoyed baseball, music and politics.

"Politics is his second love and baseball is his first," Derby said.

He said he accompanied Russo here to be questioned by Garrison's staff. He said he saw Russo get hypnotized by Garrison's aides and then explained that Russo underwent questioning under the influence of sodium pentathol, or truth serum.

Garrison's office has acknowledged it uses hypnosis, truth serum and lie-detector tests in questioning witnesses.

Equally mystifying is the matter of the other persons at the party in Ferrie's home about which Ruso testified. With both Ferrie and Oswald dead, it is generally believed that Garrison will have to produce another guest at the party who can testify that he saw Shaw, alias Clem Bertrand, at Ferrie's home the evening Russo alleges he heard the assassination plotted.